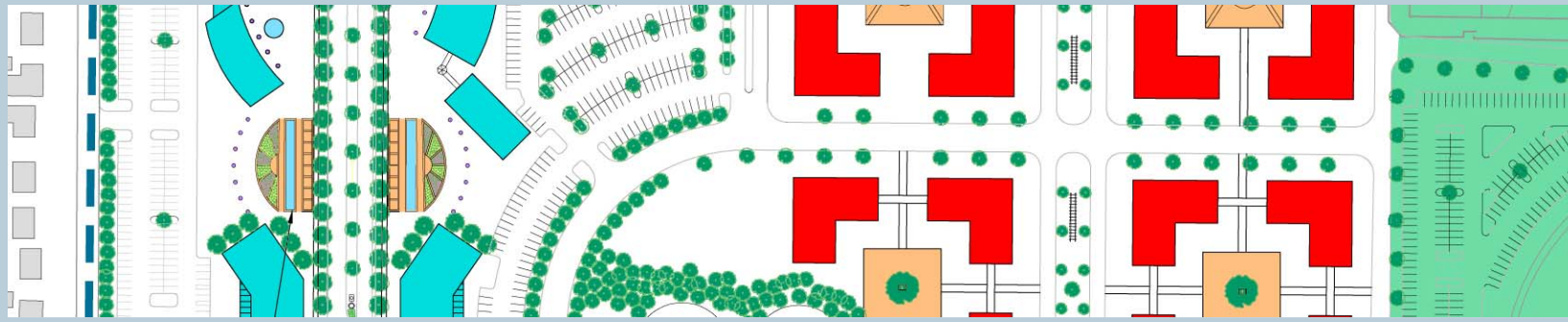


Chapter 5



Redevelopment Zones

Introduction

Several zones or subareas are contained within the larger Redevelopment District. Each of these zones has its own identity and character. The goals, objectives and strategies for these areas reflect their individuality and will guide future development to ensure compatibility.

The three subareas found in the Redevelopment District are: the Gateway (Rivershore area), the Corridor, and the Downtown area. The following describes specific plans for each of these zones. In describing the redevelopment elements for these subareas, some strategies are repeated for clarity purposes.



Gateway



Corridor



Downtown

Gateway

Vision

A thriving area with fully developed commercial and hospitality uses which supports the needs of community and creates an identity for the area that is representative of the Highland community.

Goals

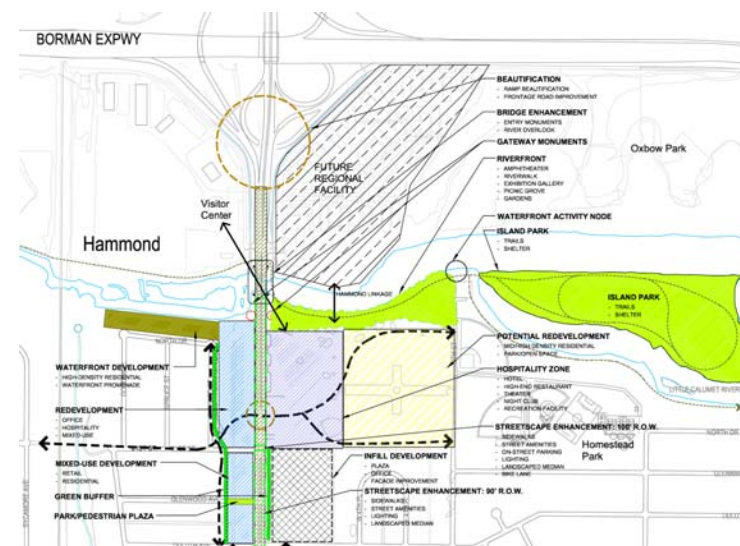
The participants in the community workshop identified the following goals for this zone.

- Enhance the Gateway area to represent Highland.
- Set the Little Calumet River as an entry resource.
- Expand Investment Opportunities.
- Promote cooperative efforts for redevelopment with the City of Hammond.

Redevelopment Opportunities

The Gateway Zone offers significant opportunity for a variety of local and regional developments and uses because of its accessibility. The area could attract investment and amenities that support entertainment, hospitality, sports, conventions, and other transit based uses. Proximity to the Borman Expressway also creates an ideal location for office space that could include first floor service businesses with larger offices on the upper floors. The area further inside, offers opportunity for mixed-use developments with 3-4 story upscale condominiums that may be suited for first-time homebuyers and active empty nesters that prefer to remain in the community rather than relocate.

Attraction of new developments, however, will require significant coordination. Readiness of the site, capital funding, and quick response will all have a significant impact on success of any development to move forward. A partnership between Highland and the City of Hammond is also imperative and should be pursued. Above constraints notwithstanding, the development opportunities identified for the Gateway Zone include:



- The commercial hospitality use on Kennedy Avenue north of 81st Avenue.
- Higher density development on public lands currently owned by the Town.
- Riverfront area for a mixed-use development utilizing available public lands.

Land Use/Zoning

Future land use for the Gateway area is heavily influenced by community input, analyses, suitability of the land, and potential opportunities. The proposed future highest and best uses for the Gateway area are:

- Hospitality, commercial and office uses on frontage of Kennedy Avenue.
- Recreational and open space on the riverfront on the east. A recreational corridor, minimum 30 feet wide, on the riverfront on the west.
- Residential, high-end single-family town homes or condominiums on the riverfront both on the east and west of Kennedy Avenue.
- Commercial retail or office on the west side of Kennedy Avenue.

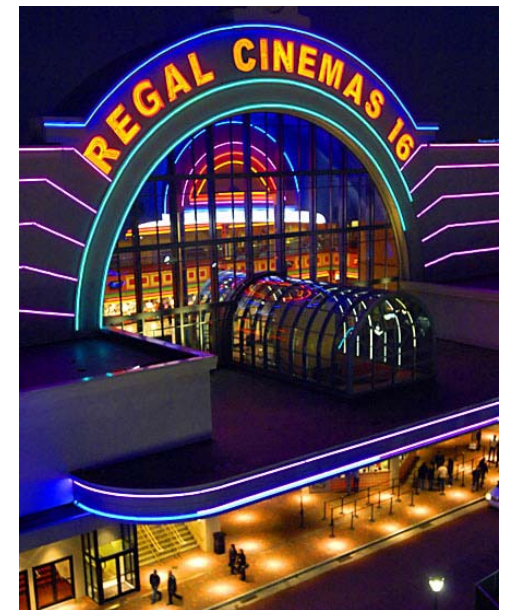
The redevelopment efforts for the waterfront, however, should truly aim to promote a live-work-play concept. The riverfront opportunities open the northwest Indiana area to amenities that are enjoyed primarily by larger urban cities. Activities in this area could range from commercial uses to mixed residential uses. The Riverfront also offers opportunities for a waterfront promenade, boating, trails, cultural activities, and festivals. Accordingly the following recommendations are appropriate for the riverfront.

- Develop waterfront as a major public and recreational facility.
- Develop higher density residential and mixed-use development south of the levee.

In accordance with above land use recommendations, the special district zoning for the Gateway area should allow Mixed-Use Hospitality and Mid/High-rise Residential. Developers should also be encouraged to have ample landscaping on front lots and maintain all parking on the back. The lot depth in this area should be set at a minimum of 270' (Richard Street) to accommodate larger developments. Incorporation of open space and public art in these developments is also highly desirable. The riverfront should be classified



Riverfront promenade



Potential hospitality use



Professional/Hospitality Building

as an open space district extending a of minimum of 100 feet south of the centerline of the levee.

Potential uses for the Gateway area could include:

Hospitality Uses

- Hotels
- Motels
- Restaurants (Higher end, no Drive through)
- Sports, Entertainment, or Recreational Uses.
- Leisure Related Services

Professional Office

- Medical office (multi-story)
- Technical/ Professional Offices
- Customer Service Centers
- Other Mixed professional Uses

Educational Facilities

- College or Preparatory Schools

Residential Uses (Only on the Riverfront Area)

Infrastructure

Infrastructure improvement for this area relates to road and bridge improvement. There is also a need for flood control. The Army Corp of Engineers, in cooperation with the Town, is addressing this concern on a regional basis. It should be noted, however, that the flooding issue is a major deterrent for new developments.



Hotel



Waterfront residential



Bowling Alley Concept - Before & After

Activities proposed under this plan include the following:

- Seek modification of the design and improve Calumet River Bridge for additional improvements including lighting and pedestrian walkways on both sides of the bridge.
- Work with City of Hammond and the State of Indiana to pool resources to modify the reconstruction of Kennedy Avenue from the Borman Expressway exit to 81st Avenue in Highland. Such modification will aim to improve the gateway area from the Expressway to fifty feet south of the River.
- Reconstruct sidewalks with parkways from bridge to 81st Avenue.

In conjunction with the reconstruction of Kennedy Avenue, sidewalk reconfiguration should also take place. This effort will also need modification to adhere to the new zoning requirements that will be developed to address setbacks, greenways and required landscaping.

Streetscaping

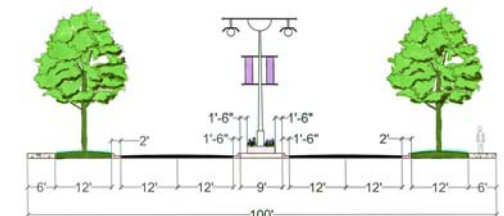
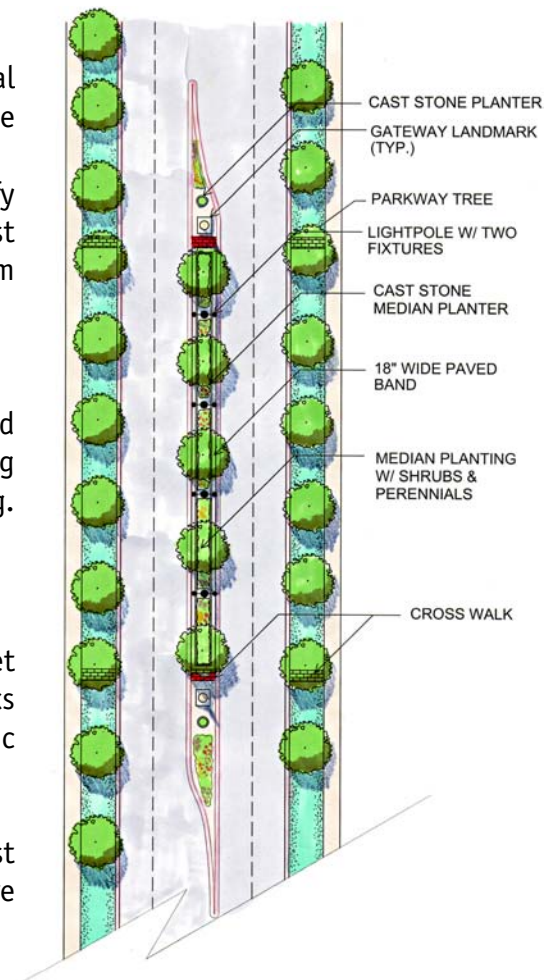
The existing character of the area and close proximity to the expressway will require street improvements to incorporate landscaping, screening, bikeways and pedestrian sidewalks and/or pathways. Such improvements will promote the community and build the civic pride and sense of place.

To accommodate future development opportunities, a Conceptual Streetscape Plan must also be prepared, identifying areas within the corridor where modifications and future improvements within the existing right-of-ways are anticipated or planned.

Activities proposed for streetscaping improvements include:

Gateway Monument

- Work with the City of Hammond and the Visitor's Bureau to develop a major gateway improvement monument on Kennedy Avenue. (Both sides of the River)



- Design and construct a lighted Highland welcome entry sign. This sign will create the first impression that visitors to Highland will encounter. It will set the standard for the look, quality and expectations of all development from the Gateway to Downtown. Other complementary features such as street lighting, landscape planters, wayfinders and artwork will reinforce this character to the visitors throughout the corridor. The entry sign, monuments and other improvements, i.e. bridge markers, should be uniformly designed and linked to the overall redevelopment efforts particularly the riverfront developments.



Examples of bridge enhancements



Potential Gateway Concept

Bridge enhancement

- Install decorative lighting and other visual enhancements on the bridge.
- Install sidewalks and an overlook area on the bridge in cooperation with the Lake County Highway Department.

Street Improvements

- Design and construct medians with center planters and landscaping from the bridge to 81st Avenue
- Design and construct a crosswalk south of the bridge to the proposed riverfront promenade.
- Design and construct a corner plaza at 81st Avenue. The corner plaza is a design feature that will invite public space interaction and encourage visitors to leave the car behind and explore the community on foot.
- Landscape the parkway with trees from the bridge to 81st Avenue. The introduction of green to the parkway in the form of tree lined streets and landscaping is a critical component for setting the stage for redevelopment. Equally important for the installation of trees and greenery is the buffer that is created between the pedestrian and motorist.
- Coordinate between agencies to take advantage of the present opportunity for Kennedy Avenue reconstruction to change the landscape of the community and provide the citizens with a glimpse of the vision of development to come.

Corridor

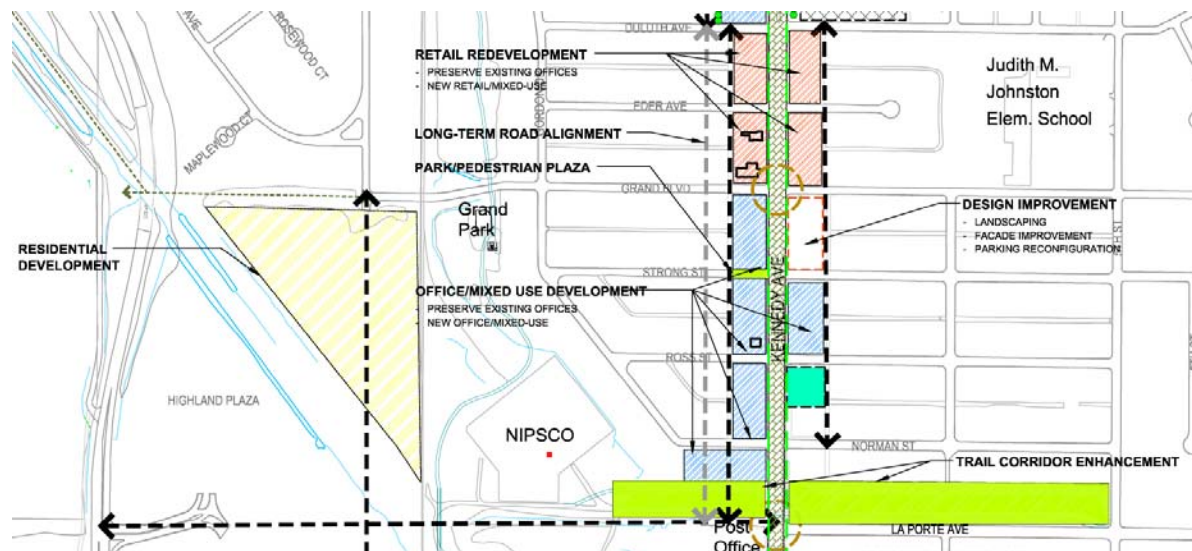
Vision

To provide a mixed corridor with clean, tree-lined streets, subtle commercial signage, and buildings of architectural distinction nestled amidst properly designed and well-maintained landscaping. To provide an organic environment with lots of curb appeal with diverse building types and uses where strolling and crossing the avenue is encouraged and quality neighborhood public spaces are on every corner with parking areas tucked behind landscaped walls and hedges or parked to the rear of buildings.

Goals

The goals established by the citizens generally represent the need for change in the character of the corridor for more attractive uses while protecting the immediate neighborhood. The goals for the corridor consist of:

1. Promote development of an attractive and walkable corridor which links Riverfront to Downtown.
2. Attract an array of investment opportunities to the Corridor.
3. Enhance Environmental Conditions of the Corridor.



Redevelopment Opportunities

Kennedy Avenue is currently a mixed-use corridor. This character should be preserved, except that the intensity of use should be increased substantially. The residents in the community meetings desired this concept. The redevelopment opportunities for the Corridor zone include:

- The Highland Plaza offers opportunity for additional commercial uses between the existing office building and the Bowling alley.
- Blocks between 81st Street and Grand Boulevard on the west offer opportunity for a mixed-use development with public plaza. On the east, the developments should be more commercial in intensity but with mixed uses on the upper levels.
- For the three blocks south of Grand Boulevard, the opportunity exists for total redevelopment on the west side, while on the east side, two sites offer opportunity for infill development: the southeast corners at Kennedy Avenue & Grand Boulevard and Kennedy Avenue & Ross Street. There is also a redevelopment opportunity on the southwest corner of Kennedy Avenue and Ross Street, which is currently a vacant lot. The redevelopment opportunity for this area will consist of residential mixed uses on the west side and commercial mixed uses on the east side.
- A vacant parcel of land (about 11 acres) east of the Norfolk-Southern Railroad Tracks offers opportunity for redevelopment, particularly if LaPorte Avenue is extended. This area should be developed for single family residential.
- Existing businesses offer excellent opportunities to become more of an anchor in the area. They must be supported to expand and improve to the fullest extent possible.

It should also be noted that the residential uses should be provided with adequate set backs, and when they are within mixed use developments, the non-residential uses should be absolutely compatible.

Land Use/Zoning

The future land use for the corridor area is heavily influenced by the character of the corridor as a link between the gateway area and Downtown. The proposed land use aims to



Infill retail w/ front plaza



New single-family residential



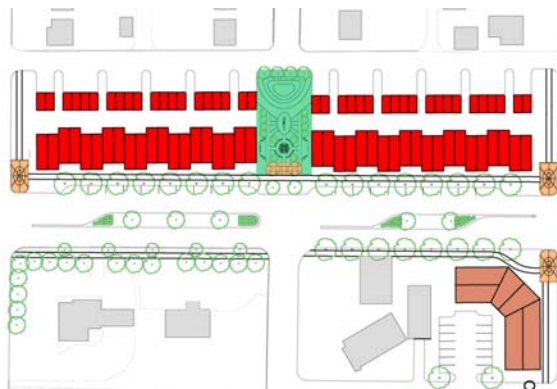
Example of acceptable residential uses

enhance this linkage by providing for uses that populate the area, encourage walking, while supporting redevelopment that is suitable for the area. Accordingly, the following future land use recommendations are developed for the Corridor zone.

- Commercial and office uses on Kennedy Avenue, particularly on the east side.
- Residential, high-end single-family town homes, condominiums or mixed uses on the west side of the street.
- Public plazas, parks, and other open spaces where possible as a part of redevelopment, particularly at the end of the existing crossing blocks.
- Single family residential uses on a vacant land east of the Railroad track between Grand Boulevard and LaPorte Avenue.

In accordance with above land use recommendations, the zoning of the corridor should be changed to mixed-use mid-rise residential with some commercial and retail allowance on the east side. Developers should also be encouraged to have ample landscaping on front yards and provide parking in the back. In these blocks, the lot depth should be set at a minimum of 200' to accommodate modern developments.

Several blocks offer an opportunity for Block Parks and Plazas, while mid-block plazas can be developed as a part of redevelopment. The proposed amenities should also be incorporated into the plans on a case-by-case basis. The vacant area east of the Railroad track should be zoned for single family residential. As a whole, the permitted uses for the corridor should include:



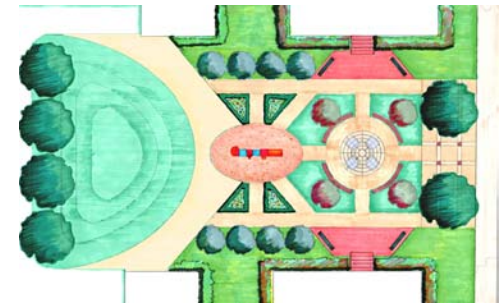
Prototype layout of a townhouse block



Prototype of infill & redevelopment blocks along Kennedy Ave.



Concept for a mid-block plaza



Concept for a mid-block park

Residential

- Town Houses (2-3 stories)
- Condominium (3-4 stories)
- Rental Apartments and Lofts (higher end, with parking garages)
- Work and Live in Units with first floor commercial uses.

Professional Services

- Medical Services
- Accounting
- Other non- retail Services

Health and Fitness

- Dance studios
- Fitness Studios
- Women's health
- Medical establishments
- Health related Support services

Art and specialty uses establishments

- Galleries
- Artists' Supply
- Design services
- Music Stores
- Antiques/Collectible Stores
- Clock or Watch Stores or Repair Shops
- Lamp Shops
- Hobby Shops
- Gift Shops

Food and Eating Establishments (Only where establishment faces a corner plaza, park, or interior plaza)

- Bakeries or Pastry Shops
- Cafés
- Delicatessen Stores
- Diners
- Specialty Food Stores



Example of an approved townhouse design



Restaurants may only be located when facing a corner plaza, park, or interior plaza.



Concept for a corner plaza

Infrastructure

Infrastructure improvements for this zone relate to road closures and extensions of roads to facilitate future developments. Every block is also proposed to have a corner plaza. Such plazas should be incorporated in any future road improvements.

Activities proposed under this plan include the following:

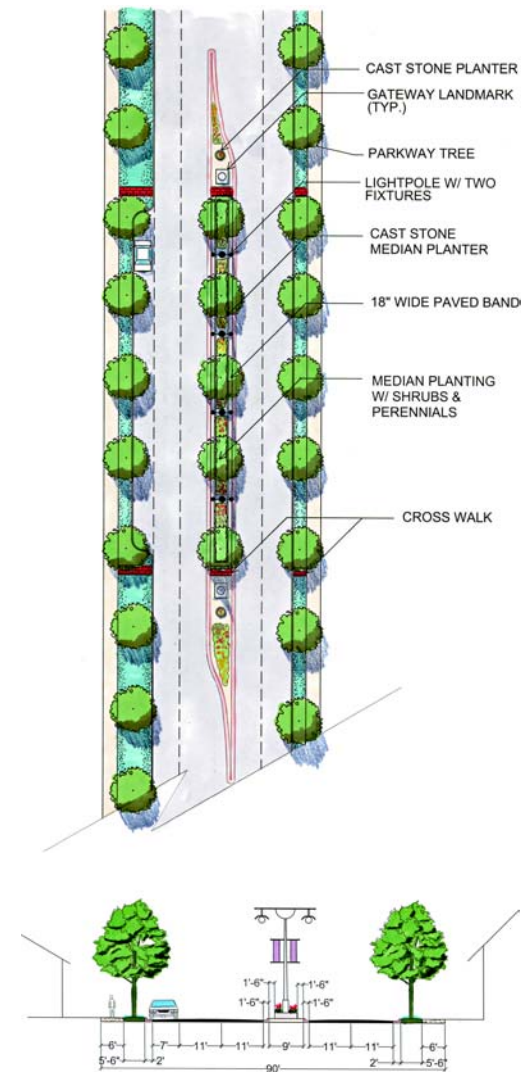
- Reduce the number of curb cuts on the street. Encourage parking entrances from the side streets.

- Extend LaPorte Street west to link Kennedy Avenue with Indianapolis Boulevard.
- Widen the right of way between 81st Street and LaPorte Street on the east by ten feet to allow future extension of the medians in this section when these blocks are redeveloped.
- Extend utilities to the vacant land west of the R.R. track for residential development.
- Reconstruct sidewalks with parkways and corner plazas from the bridge to 81st Avenue to LaPorte Avenue as a part of current Kennedy Avenue reconstruction efforts.

Streetscape Improvements

The existing character of the zone and its role as a linkage between the Gateway area and the Downtown will require special consideration for pedestrian, bike, and car traffic. Future improvements should support amenities that strengthen the linkage. These improvements will promote strolling and walking while creating a unified, contiguous district that stretches from the expressway to Downtown. Kennedy Avenue should also support cross traffic in order to have a more unified and complete street. Streetscaping improvements proposed for the corridor include:

- Design and construct medians with center planters and landscaping from 81st Avenue to LaPorte Avenue.
- Design and construct cross walks at all intersections. Crosswalk design should conform in material and overall appearance of the street furnishings and sculpture themes adopted.
- Design and construct corner plazas at all crossings with Kennedy Avenue.
- Provide unique public art elements in every corner plaza.
- Encourage development of public plazas or urban parks in all new developments, particularly where a public street can be closed.
- In cooperation with the neighborhood, develop the end of block parks as a community space and public space.
- Create a green landscape parkway with trees from 81st Avenue to LaPorte Avenue.
- Support coordination between agencies to incorporate street reconstruction efforts with streetscaping.



Downtown

Downtown Highland is well positioned to continue the revitalization started a few years ago. The recommendations in this Plan seek to build upon successes from the past and help foster a thriving downtown. While the recommendations have been presented in a number of categories, all revitalization elements are interrelated. Strategies to stabilize the housing stock and introduce new housing will strengthen the retail base. Efforts to improve the public realm will support the success of Downtown Highland retailers, etc. The end result will be an environment conducive to all types of activity, particularly those favored by families.

Vision

The Highland community envisions a healthy, vibrant downtown with attractive streets and well-maintained sidewalks filled with people and activity. We see a diverse array of shopping, dining, working, and cultural amenities housed in Downtown buildings.

The vision presents downtown as a social and cultural center of the community, and the first place where residents want to take visitors. At night, Downtown is filled with people and activity, with lights on in upper story apartment windows throughout the downtown area.

Goals

The participants in the community workshop identified the following goals for downtown.

- Create a dynamic business environment in Downtown.
- Make downtown a family and children friendly environment.
- Make downtown the center of social and cultural life of Highland.
- Make downtown a place of live, work, play, and shop
- Create an “18-hour downtown”.

Redevelopment Opportunities

The redevelopment opportunities in Downtown consist of three types of activities. First, opportunities provided by the underutilized or vacant properties. Second the vacant land that is suitable for infill development. Third, opportunities offered by sites that are either underutilized or can be better utilized for more suitable uses.

- Development opportunities for adaptive reuse exist throughout the Downtown. These opportunities need to be identified and marketed for suitable uses.
- Some of the buildings require zoning clearance. For such buildings, the new zoning classification should be used to promote adaptive reuse, extension or modification of building layout, to allow alternative uses.
- Several parcels offer infill development opportunity. These sites are located on Highway Avenue and Kennedy Avenue. As a general rule, in redevelopment efforts, all sites that are facing Highway or Kennedy Avenues should be redeveloped for higher use, while relocating parking lots behind the buildings.
- The Theater offers significant catalytic opportunity for redevelopment. The Theater should be supported and perhaps expanded to give it a larger presence in Downtown. In addition, property immediately adjacent to the Theater should be supported for uses that create additional synergy with the theater.
- The Finke's building offers an opportunity for redevelopment as a youth activity center, arts gallery, or other mixed use.
- The site on the southwest corner of Highway and Kennedy Avenue offers the greatest opportunity for redevelopment. The proposed Town Hall or another institutional traffic generator should be considered for this area. Any new development on this site should support the general architecture of Downtown with ample open space to attract visitors to downtown.
- The site between Condit Avenue and Garfield Avenue, an underutilized industrial land, offers an opportunity for high-density residential development, a park in association with the existing trail, and a farmers market.

